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ABSTRACT

A review of literature was conducted in order to: (1) determine whether factors placing the young child at risk for school failure can be identified; (2) determine whether early family interventions and early childhood programs are effective; and (3) identify policy implications. Findings are summarized, and recommendations are offered. Research indicated that it is possible to identify the link between lower socioeconomic conditions and school failure, and that the existence of multiple factors dramatically increases developmental risk. Intertwined in the fabric of risk factors are the influences of poverty, poor physical and mental health of parents, malnutrition, developmental delays, and lack of stimulation in the child's development. The majority of findings concerning early family intervention strategies and early childhood programs indicated that the programs are effective. A concluding section discusses implications for the at-risk homeless child. Approximately 65 references are cited and annotated. (RH)

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THE AT RISK CHILD:

EARLY IDENTIFICATION, INTERVENTION,

AND EVALUATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD STRATEGIES.

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the Course E591- Exit Project

Indiana University at South Bend
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INTRODUCTION

There has never been an easy answer to the persistent question of what can be done to solve the educational problems of the at- risk child. Of particular consternation to educators during the 60's was the growing problems presented by the "economically disadvantaged" child. The country focused on civil unrest and the inequities in the educational system. The 80' s however, witnessed the concern for "...the intellectual and socioeconomic well-being of our entire nation," and consternation turned to fear. (Pellicano, 1987, p.47) "[At- risk youngsters place society at risk of becoming a 'Third World' inhabited by individuals who are dependent, underdeveloped, uncompetitive....." (Pellicano, p.48)

Harold Howe II, former U.S. Commissioner of Education and co-chairman of the National Board of Inquiry into Schools, entitled "Barriers to Excellence: Our Children at-risk," reported in 1985 that, "The children at-risk, are growing in number and proportion in our schools. For economic reasons we need to make them successful. They require the same quality education that several other national studies have called for, but the road for them is longer and harder. They need a combination of encouragement and special help that this nation, by reordering its priorities, can easily afford." (Cardenas, 1985, p.7)

As educators and researchers stand on the bridge to the 21st century , the picture of the at-risk child, in view of these statistics, presents little hope and a perilous course downstream. "The potential high school graduate in the year 2000 is now a preschooler. One in four of today's preschool children is poor; one in nine is living in a household with income less than half the poverty level. Only 16 percent of these eligible poor children are enrolled in Head Start, and only half can expect to be given compensatory education when they go to elementary school in the next couple of years.....one in six lives in a family where no parent has a job, one in five

is likely to become a teen parent, and one in seven is likely to drop out of school." (Edelman, 1987,p.31)

The research indicates that there is enormous support for early childhood intervention programs recognizing this age as one of "the greatest vulnerability and the greatest opportunity for investment in the future of our society and our economy." (Sugarman, 1989 p.24) Pellicano urged curriculum leaders to develop a new academic agenda recognizing the "social diversity and the social fragility of their charges." (p.49) The call for early educational intervention as a primary tool to circumvent later school failure has received bi-partisan support in state and federal legislatures.

The importance of examining those factors which place a child at-risk, the relationship between socioeconomic level of the family and the schools, and resulting multiple risk factors are key focuses of researchers. Family assessment and the involvement of the child's care-giver is emphasized by Sugarman, who writes, "the development of children is integrally related to the healthy development of their adult nurturers." (p. 25) Once these factors have been identified, policy makers must look to research on family intervention, and early childhood programs for reliable evaluations of those programs before implementation. Sugarman's study documents both short and long-term effectiveness research. The consensus concerning initial short- term effectiveness was generally accepted, but the data describing long-term effects has led to some controversy.

There is absolutely no disagreement that bold and broad steps must be taken immediately. A school corporation must avail itself of current research and form strong alliances with other community agencies. By developing open lines of communication with families based on trust and genuine concern, policymakers and educators would be taking the first steps foward before the graduates of 2000 fail.

THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Early identification of at-risk factors, well researched intervention strategies, and fully implemented Early Childhood programs may be the only way to save the at-risk children of the 1990's. These programs must draw on the educational and community expertise and the financial commitment of federal, state, and local resources.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study examines research concerning the identification of at-risk factors as they are related to the socioeconomic level of children and their families. It furthered examines, how those risk factors later effected the child's developmental preparation for schooling, the parental attitudes that influence the readiness process and the intervention programs which seek to alter negative outcomes.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The initial part of the study will attempt to answer two questions; first, is it possible to identify in the early life of the child, those factors which put a child at-risk for later school failure; and what part does the existence of multiple risk factors play in educational outcomes for the child? Central to the second part of the study is whether it is possible to alter negative outcomes through early intervention programs which target families and their young children?

What short and long term sucess has been documented to warrant moral and financial support for the continuation of those efforts and the further expansion of Early Childhood programs, targeting at-risk children? Part three will focus on how these research findings may effect future policy decisions. An addition to the main study will deal with the at-risk problems of the homeless children.

Originally, the primary focus of this study was concerned with the homeless child, and the challenges facing educators as they attempt to meet those educational needs. The lack of published research at this time, however, dictated that the focus be directed to the children of low socioeconomic level and a parallel be drawn to the homeless child and their unique set of at-risk factors facing educators and society in general.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The lack of information addressing assessment and intervention programs on the infant, toddler level was a further indication of how difficult it is to effect programs that work within the heart of the family structure. The infant leaves the hospital and often is not seen by a medical doctor, does not enter a Head start program, and is not observed for developmental assessment until entry to kindergarten or first grade. Hence, research studies focused primarily on evaluations of programs dealing with school age children.

This study does not relate early intervention or education program benefits to middle or high socioeconomic level children although limited research has indicated that gains made by higher economic level children were not significant.

No specific recommendations were made in this study as to the benefits of oneEarly Childhood program versus another.

Glossary of Terms

assessment -- "A process for determining a child's strengths and weaknesses." (Kirk and Gallagher 1986 : 507)

at-risk -- "Those students who are unlikely to leave school (at whatever age) with an adequate level of basic skills." (Slavin, Karwert et al. 1989 : 5)

attention disorder -- "An inability to employ selective attention; that is, the inability to stop responding to too many stimuli." (Kirk and Gallagher 1986 : 508)

communication disorders -- "Impairment in articulation, language, voice or fluency." (Kirk and Gallagher 1986 : 509)

compensatory education -- "Refers to federal programs targeting low-achieving disadvantaged students." (Slavin, Karweit et al. 1989 : 6)

consortium--"Collection of follow-up studies."(Schweinhart, Weikart, 1986 :7)

delayed language development -- "Orderly development that progresses at a slower rate than normal and is significantly below the appropriate language performance for the child's chronological age." (Kirk and Gallagher, 1986 : 511)

developmental learning disabilities -- "Slow or absent development of psychological or linguistic functions." (Kirk and Gallagher, 1986 : 511)

ecological based assessment -- "A process for determining the physical, environmental, nutritional and/or social factors that accompany or contribute to a child's problems." (Kirk and Gallagher, 1986 : 511)

ethology -- "Originated within zoology and initially studied lower-order animals in their natural habitats. Attention recently shifted to humans, including young children." (Goodwin : 222)

etiology -- "The study of causes or origins of a disease or condition." (Kirk and Gallagher, 1986 : 512)

intervention -- "Any action on the part of an organism that serves to change the relative position of the objects or forces of the environment and of the organism itself, thus bringing new stimuli to bear on the organism. (Good, 1973 : 314)

longitudinal study -- "A study that follows a case or group of cases over a long period of time. . . its purpose may be to gather normative data on growth, to plot trends (as of attitudes) or to observe the effects of special factors." (Good, 1973 : 565)

meta-analysis -- "Analysis made from a collection of studies." ((Schweinhart, Weikart, 1986 : 49)

paradigm -- (1) "A representation, a model of a theory, an idea, or a principle;" (2) "A pattern of procedure." (Good, 1973 : 407)

pedagogy (therapeutic) -- "Correction of disabilities, particularly in the academic area, through specialized educational techniques." (Good, 1973 : 412)

socioeconomic background -- "The background or environmental indicative of both the social and economic status of an individual or group." (Good, 1973 : 542)

socioeconomic influences -- "The social and economic forces bearing upon an individual, group, institution, law, policy etc." (Good, 1973 : 542)

sociometry -- "Measurement of the interpersonal relationships prevailing among the members of a group." (Good, 1973 : 543)

status, socioeconomic -- "The level indicative of both the social and the economic position of an individual or group." (Good, 1973 : 558)

synthesis -- "Process of putting together to form a whole." (Kirk and Gallagher, 1986 : 518)

variables -- "Any trait that changes from one case or condition to another; more strictly, the representation of the trait, usually in quantative form, such as a measurement or enumeration." (Good, 1973 : 638)

ANNOTATIONS

IS IT POSSIBLE TO IDENTIFY THOSE FACTORS IN THE EARLY LIFE OF THE CHILD WHICH PLACE HIM/HER AT RISK FOR LATER SCHOOL FAILURE?

Book, Robert M. "Identification of Educationally At-Risk Children During the Kindergarten Year: A Four Year Follow-Up Study of Group Test Performance." Psychology in the Schools, 17 (1980) : 153-158.

Book presented group tests data that identified children at the kindergarten level as high, moderate and low-risk for academic failure. Based on a study of 472 children from grades one through four, the extensive screening battery did predict group achievement performance through the fourth grade. The author cautions that these tests must not entirely replace the observation and diagnostic evaluation by the child's teacher. Further, he states, "unless the end result of screening is a more effective education program for the child, even the minimal costs involved do not justify its use as a means of identifying children." (p. 158)

Bradley, Robert H., and Bettye M. Caldwell. "Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment: A Revision of the Preschool Scale." American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 84.3 (1979) : 235-244.

Bradley and Caldwell set forth in this study to present additional validity information on the Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment Inventory (HOME). The researchers report that Caldwell's inventory is "one of the most widely used environmental process measures." (p. 236) This particular study gathered data from 233 volunteer families in Little Rock, Arkansas. The socio-demographic characteristics were similar among both black and white families, predominantly low to lower middle class economically. One of the purposes of the research was to eliminate unnecessary items in the inventory. Additionally, a high correlation was observed between the results of the HOME scales and the IQ of the child. The researchers stressed the importance of developing screening and diagnostic procedures that were more "sensitive to the child's developmental environment if we are to accurately identify children at risk." (p.235)

Cavallaro, Sahli, A., and Richard H. Porter. "Peer Preferences of At-Risk and Normally Developing Children in a Preschool Mainstream Classroom." American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 84.4 (1980) : 357-366.

This research study analyzed data obtained through classroom observation of 20 preschool children enrolled in an experimental classroom. The age range was 54 to 89 months and they represented both black and white races from low to middle socio-economic background. The children were determined to be "developmentally delayed on the basis of deficient language, motor, cognitive or learning skills, " and were designated as the at-risk group. Evidence gained through observation of social interaction, play and "gaze orientation" indicated that both the normally developing group and the at-risk group showed a preference for their cognitive peer group. Cavallaro's conclusion called for mainstreaming in smaller groups and combining at-risk children with younger normally developing children in structured settings to encourage social interaction.

Colarusso, Ronald, Andrew Plankenhorn, and Randall Brooks. "Predicting First-Grade Achievement Through Formal Testing of 5 Year-Old High-Risk Children." Journal of Special Education, 14.3 (1980) : 355-361.

This research study conducted by Colarusso and his associates utilized 40 inner-city 5 year-old children who were participants in a Head-Start Program. Their data revealed that, while there was a moderate correlation between the results of the formal test given to the students in kindergarten, and the follow-up achievement tests administered upon completion of first grade, the predictability ratio was not significant. In their opinion, "to identify a child with a potential learning problem at an early age is to hypothesize rather than confirm the possibility of later school failure." (p. 355) They did, however, express concern with accepting teacher observation assessment for at-risk without documentation since research studies indicate that those assessments are often subjective by nature and "teacher's tend to err in the direction of false positives." (p. 356)

Gabriel, Roy M., and Patricia S. Anderson. "Identifying At-Risk Youth in the Northwest States: A Regional Database." The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory Program Report, Portland, Oregon, (1987) : 31p. Eric Document 282 125.

This study was undertaken to assist states, local districts, and consolidated school corporations with the broad indicators needed to identify at-risk students. Although targeting one geographical area, the researchers make their case of similar patterns in school districts of "varying size, rurality and poverty levels." In identifying students at-risk, the authors presented longitudinal study outcomes which fall into three categories: background characteristics, school performance and social behavior. This report compiled the recent literature and research in tracking the effects of risk indicators and presented those in Table I of the report.

_____"Identification and Definities of Factors Casually Associated with Child Abuse and Neglect, Final Report." National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect. Washington, D.C. (1978) Eric Document 161-221.

This study presented the results of research into the multi-factors theory relating child abuse and neglect. Such factors as personality characteristics of the parent's environment, stress, and children "at-risk" were analyzed in their relation to 240 low socio-economic status mothers. According to the study, "unemployment, illness, evictions and arrests are representative of the life events sampled "and these poverty--related experiences are particularly common in neglecting families."[36] Of particular significance in this study were the findings that indicated that level of stress was found to be the same in both the abusing parents and the "neglecting control group." The study further indicated that levels of stressful experience grew and reach a peak prior to an abusive pattern.

Ireton, Harold, Kin Shing-Lu and Maureen Kampen. "Minnesota Preschool Inventory Identification of Children At-Risk for Kindergarten Failure." Psychology in the Schools, 18 (1981) : 394-401.

Recognizing that the need for early identification of students at-risk for early school failure (kindergarten), Ireton and his colleagues developed this study of the Minnesota Preschool Inventory. The inventory and resulting profile relied heavily on the standardized assessment of the child's current development according to the mother's report for children age one to six year. Using a variative sample of 360 children, validity was measured in terms of the Inventory obtained in the spring prior to kindergarten entry and the overall kindergarten performance based on the teacher's assessment index. In the final analysis, 20 children were identified as at-risk for poor kindergarten performance. The researchers report only a 3% incidence of mislabeling, but were especially concerned with 8 children who were not identified as being at-risk in initial inventory. This inventory, according to the findings, "presented a picture of the parent's concerns and of the child's development, adjustment and symptoms." (p. 401) The conclusion calls for "cautious use of" labeling and over-identification of children at-risk. (p. 401)

Judy, J. "Early Screening is Essential for Educational Accountability." Educational Leadership, 43.3 (November, 1986) : 87-88

Judy's research indicated that early childhood educators prefer screening battery tests that assess the developmental stages of the growth and maturation of the child She relates the three basic components which are critical to the success of any screening program. As a result of the research and practical application of the "Early Prevention of School Failure," the three components were: 1) staff development and training were essential to success 2) the screening should provide a needs assessment which will directly effect program planning, and 3) parents will be a source of support if they understand screening procedures and receive prompt results. Among the conclusions, according to Judy, was that it was much more economical to provide prevention of measures for the child rather than remedial measures later. "The long-term consequences of screening include significant savings to society in terms of services that will not be required." (p. 88) She stressed that, 'parents should be given test results, so that both the home and school can develop realistic goals, based on documented stages of child growth." (p. 88)

Kristiansson, Bengt and Sven P. Fallstrom. "Growth at the Age of 4 Years Subsequent to Early Failure to Thrive." Child Abuse and Neglect: The International Journal, 11.1 (1987) : 35-40.

This study followed the progress of 55 children identified by pediatricians as having a diagnosis of "early organic and non-organic failure to thrive." One group was chosen because they exhibited organic reasons for their low birth weight and continued slow growth patterns. They were identified as the OFTT group (21 children). The second group with non-organic failure to thrive (NFTT) were children from families with psychosocial factors such as: single parent, ill health, poor nutrition of mother, social welfare dependency, drug and alcohol abuse, etc. The children in the second group were assigned "psychosocial scores" depending on the number of "at-risk factors" noted above. The higher "psychosocial scored children" were assigned to strong social psychological intervention. Two of these children were placed in foster homes, some assigned to day-care centers, and some at-home counselors were assigned by social welfare services. By age four, the children in the OFTT group had normalization of growth in weight and height. Children in the NFTT group with lower psychosocial scores showed partial gains but not as great as the first group. Of the group with strong outside intervention, there was more progress than the group without intervention and lower at-risk factors. However, as a group, they "continued to grow slowly, and seemed to maintain a sub-optimal growth pattern, particularly those with higher numbers of risk factors." (p. 35)

Martin, Roy P. "Assessment of the Social and Emotional Functioning of Preschool Children." School Psychology Review, 15.2 (1986) : 216-232.

This study presented various techniques and instruments used by the school psychologist in assessments of preschool children. The impetus toward the assessment of the young child, according to the author, is directly related to the downward extension of schooling. Led by the compensatory education movement of the 1960's, schools became more aware of the at-risk factors that caused a child to lack "readiness" for the school experience. Problems in the assessment of the young child lie in lack of verbal and visual motor response capabilities, inability to read, lack of complex information processing skills and behavior during the assessment process. Although direct observation was more reliable and valid it was often cost prohibitive and required special training. Relying on the good-will contributions of a caregiver (teacher or parent), rating scales were the most commonly used method of assessment. Martin postulates, however, that "the most promising associative technique for preschool assessment involves the analysis of play." He indicated that the work of Yawkey and Pelegrini in 1982 was key to the research into play as an "individual difference measurement." (p. 227) According to the author, the future will bring "direct observation of interactions between young children and significant people in the home and preschool settings." (p. 230)

Meisels, Samuel J. "Testing Four and Five Year-Olds: Responses to Salzer and Shepard and Smith." Education Leadership, 44 (1986) : 90-92.

Meisels, Professor of Education and Research Scientist, University of Michigan, makes a forceful argument for the appropriate kind of testing for preschool age children. He urges the use of developmental screening tools rather than school readiness tests. According to the author, the developmental test can "sort out children who are at risk for school success" (p. 91) and identify children who will need special educational services. The strengths of the developmental tests are predictive validity, developmental content, and normative standardization. Current research indicates that readiness tests have been used to "deny children services or to place them in special classes without benefit of a complete diagnostic evaluation." (p. 92)

Paget, Kathleen D. and Richard J. Nagle. "A Conceptual Model of Preschool Assessment." School Psychology Review, 15.2 (1986) : 154-165.

This study presented an "ecologically--based" delivery of services for preschool assessments. Paget and Nagle began with early developmental theorists (i.e., Flavell, 1977; Guilford, 1967; and Piaget, (1967) and the work of Bruner, (1960) and Bloom, (1964), all of whom stressed the importance of understanding how the young child acquires knowledge. Today's child, according to the authors, must be understood and assessed in terms of a multi-dimensional evaluation involving his/her parents, teachers, family unit, and setting characteristics. Every child, according to the authors is unique and "no one technique or strategy is appropriate across all children, behaviors or environments (Reynolds, Guthin, Eilliott and Witt, 1984." (p. 158) In conclusion Paget and Nagle stressed "the uniqueness of the preschool population and the interdependent nature of assessment and intervention strategies as components of the same process." (p. 163).

Pellicano, Roy R. "At Risk: A View of Social Advantage." Educational Leadership, 44 (March, 1987) ; 47-49.

Pellicano described the factors which place the poor child of the 1990's at risk for alienation from productive society. Those "societal" concerns have replaced the agenda of the 1960's for the "disadvantaged child," with the fear that these children are now a societal risk. Pellicano urged educators to develop a new academic agenda recognizing the "social diversity and the social fragility of their charges." (p. 49) According to Pellicano, "they place society at risk of becoming a Third World, inhabited by individuals who are dependent, underdeveloped, uncompetitive and unreactive to market forces." (p. 47) This article should be of particular interest to school board members and policy decision makers.

Phillips, C. J. "Children From Socially Disadvantaged Families and Special Education: Part II." Research in Education, 22 (November, 1979) : 24-35.

Phillips in this study concluded that children from socially disadvantaged homes should receive the same consideration as the mentally handicapped child. The Younghusband Report of 1970 proposed "a new category of special education, 'severe environmental handicap,' for those children in whom the need for special educational treatment arises in a considerable measure from very adverse family and social factors." (p. 31) Among the significant findings in his study was that of the research conducted in a play-group of the Centre for Child Study (1978). The two preschool groups, consisting of a "focus" group of low socio-economic children, and a "control" group of average income children were observed for social interaction, language, and maturity level of play. The "focus" children: related less to one another, spending about half their time alone . . . " (p. 29) In general, they were in a lower stage of development and self-help skills than the control group.

Sameroff, Arnold J., Ronald Seifer, Ralph Barocas and Others. "Intelligence Quotient Scores of 4 Year Old Children: Social--Environmental Risk Factors." Pediatrics, 79.3 (March, 1987) : 343-350.

The purpose of this study was to examine "the relation between broad 'macroscopic' risk-factors such as socioeconomic status and those 'microscopic' risk-factors such as familial, psychologic and interactional variables in the family unit." Based on data from a longitudinal study in Rochester, N.Y., 215 families were followed from the pregnancy of the mother until the child was 4 years of age. A set of 10 risk-factors were identified ranging from poor mental health of the mother to stressful life events and family size. In each factor, each family was either determined to be in the high or low risk range. Sameroff, et al. concluded from these studies "that poverty is the primary correlate of mild mental retardation." (p. 343) Among the findings were verbal IQ scores for 4 year olds, poverty was the overriding variable and the "probability of falling into the low IQ group was 24 times as great in the high-risk group compared to the low-risk group." (p. 348) The other key to this research outcome was the significance that a combination of risk factors, especially where maternal instability is involved, increase probability of mild retardation in the child. This factor appears to over-ride a single biologic factor.

Saracho, Olivia N., "Assessing Individual Differences in Young Children." Studies in Educational Evaluation, 8 (1983) : 229-236.

This research study stressed the importance of recognizing individual differences in the learning styles of children. The research indicated that too many programs are developed and evaluated on the basis of "group trends" in early childhood interventions rather than attempting to match children's abilities and the learning environment. Saracho reviewed the cognitive learning styles and current studies in the field relating to assessment procedures and descriptions. Planning intervention with at-risk children would necessitate program evaluations based on complete assessment of individual differences.

Schorr, Lisbeth B. Within Our Reach, New York, Doubleday, 1985.

With a background in human services and social policy, Schorr has complied in her work, the experience and research of the past two decades. This book documented those programs, researched based and carefully structured, that have been found to be successful in working with the disadvantaged population. One of the major conclusions of the meta-analysis of research indicated, "It is only with systematic intervention and support from outside the family unit early in the life cycle, that programs can improve the educational prospects of children at risk."

Soderman, Anne K. and Marian Phillips. "The Early Education of Males: Where Are We Failing Them?". Educational Leadership, 44 (1986) : 70-72.

Soderman and Phillips have compiled research findings which indicated that males are at risk and labeled emotionally impaired and learning disabled without valid assessments. This study cited research in areas of psychosexual differences (Maccaby and Jacklin 1974), structural differences in the brain, (Garmon 1985) and developmental differences. Studies indicate that boys lag 6 to 18 months behind girls in approaching accelerated stages of thought and Beattse's (1970) research that found that the differences in achievement between boys and girls upon school entry were as great or greater than the differences between younger and older entrants, "particularly in language skills." Citing a 1985 pilot study, 792 kindergarten children in Lansing, Michigan were screened for potential risk factors. In using the Daheron and Brigance assessment tools, the boys' scores were found to be consistently lower than the girls. Further research is needed to better assess young children and to develop learning environments to accommodate different learning styles and developmental timetables.

Soraci, Sal A., C. W. Deckner, Marianne Haenlein and Others. "Oddity Performance in Preschool Children at Risk for Mental Retardation." Research in Developmental Disabilities, 8 (1987) : 137-151.

Subjects selected for this study were students in the preschool of the John F. Kennedy Center affiliated with Vanderbilt University. Participants in the program had been screened with the Denver Developmental Assessment tool and were determined to be at risk for mental retardation. Ten children were initially chosen but with further screening for behavior disorders which would further affect the results, only 5 children participated in the study. This results of this study indicate that learning delays in mildly retarded children may be due to " a lower sensitivity to relational information." rather than "unexplicated attentional limitations" (Nettlebesh and Brewer, 1981). (p. 150)

Thurlow, Martha L., Patrick O'Sullivan and James E. Ysseldyke. "Early Screening for Special Education: How Accurate?". Educational Leadership, 44.3 (November, 1986) : 93-95.

Thurlow and her colleagues have presented the results of project studies coordinated at the University of Minnesota which focused on Early Childhood screening programs. Although this study focused on handicapped children, the Minnesota Preschool Screening program offered free health and developmental assessment on a voluntary basis, to all three and a half to five year old children in the state. It was reported that of the 45,000 screened, 31 percent were identified as having hearing or speech problems and 24 percent were referred for further testing. One positive outcome of this study indicated that "periodic assessments and monitoring of pupil progress in the classroom can positively influence a student's performance." (p. 64) However, the authors warn emphatically that great care must be taken so that children do not end up in early special education classes, and therefore are prohibited from moving back into regular education.

White, Sheldon H. "Opening the Door: Taking a New Look at Research About the Programs for Disadvantaged Young Children and Their Parents." Young Children, 44 (1988) : 66-70.

White, a researcher who studied federal programs in the 70's and put together a synthesis of basic research and program evaluation has carefully examined current studies in the field. The special emphasis in this study was a review of Elizabeth Schorr's book "Within Our Reach," which represents a compilation of research in dealing with the economically disadvantaged. According to White, research in New York by Sameroff and associates proved that reduction in risk factors can reduce the probability of unfavorable outcomes later in the life of the child. Their study included 215 families in Rochester, N. Y. and they identified 11 variables which interfere with the development of competence in at-risk children. Rutters research in England (1980) showed "that children with one risk factor were not more likely to suffer serious consequences than children with none." Research indicates however, "the higher number of risk factors, the lower the competence." (p. 68)

Wilson, C. Chrisman. "Family Assessment in Preschool Evaluation." School Psychology Review, 15 (1986): 166-179.

Emphasizing the critical need for early intervention strategies, Wilson developed an overview of well researched approaches to preschool family assessments. The preschool child, according to Wilson, "must be evaluated in the context of his/her family and environmental settings." Highlighting the common assessment tools, including interviews, observational procedures, participant observation and self-reported approaches (questionnaires and self-monitoring), Wilson evaluated their use and validity in the family setting. According to Wilson, "distressed families are characterized by high levels of unpleasant social stimulation . . . ." (p. 170) "Factors such as marital satisfaction, the characteristics of parent-parent and parent-child interactions, family size, employment status and member's overall satisfaction in the family, must be included in a comprehensive assessment." (p. 171)

Worland, Julien, Harriet Lander, Victor Hasselbrock. "Psychological Evaluation of Clinical Disturbance in Children At Risk for Psychopathology." Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 88 (1979): 13-24.

The researchers have summarized the findings of a longitudinal study of children at risk. Part of this study evaluated the at-risk factors of children of schizophrenics and manic depressives. The control group focused on children of a physically handicapped parent to evaluate "the influence of parental illness." There was a normal comparison group of children. Through psycho-dynamic evaluation, Worland and his colleagues sought to determine variables that identify the at-risk factors, in this case clinical disturbance, before they fully developed. The study involved 339 children, both black and white from both sexes. Considering the higher incidence of mental illness in high-risk and homeless families, this research investigation formula could be of significance.

DO EARLY FAMILY INTERVENTIONS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS WORK?

Dush, David M., and E. Webb Stacy, Jr. "Pretesting Enhancement of Parent Compliance in a Prevention Program For High-Risk Children." Evaluation and the Health-Professions, 10 (1987) : 201-205.

Dush and Webb's research conducted in Midland, Michigan sought to examine the "impact and biases introduced by pretesting" when used in conjunction with a prevention program aimed at families of low-socioeconomic families with preschool children. The researchers documented the result of a Parent Education Program, Preschool Series called PEPPS. It consisted of a five session group educational program for families with adjusted income (below $10,000 per year for a family of four or more.) Among the components were home visits, parental skills, behavior management techniques and education relating to the emotional and developmental needs of children. Additionally, child care was provided while the parents attended classes outside the home. The PEPPS participants showed significant gains versus the non-treatment control group. This study attempted to look at the effects of a pre-test on the parental outcomes. The significant data in their study was the attrition numbers. The group not pretested showed three times the attrition rate of the pretested subjects and researchers found "no contamination of outcome variables due to pretesting." (p. 203)

Elias, Maurice J., and Charles A Maher. "Social and Affective Development of Children: A Programmatic Perspective." Exceptional Children, 49.4 (January, 1983) : 339-348.

This study reviews the implications of Public Law 94-142, particularly as it related to non-handicapped students and to the "social and affective programming" in the schools. It stressed the need for preventative measures to ensure that all students, particularly those who exhibit poor self-concepts, had opportunities in their school experience to improve their social and emotional skills. The TVDRP social problem-solving program was presented by Elias as a well research and successful approach developed through Canadian and American efforts. Again, early intervention was a key to its success and, according to Elias, represented a personal bias.

Elmer, Elizabeth. "Outcome of Residential Treatment for Abused and High-Risk Infants." Child Abuse and Neglect, 10.3 (1986) : 351-360.

This study was the result of a residential program which identified 31 infants designated as high-risk due to abuse and socioeconomic (SES) factors. The comparison group were infants with no history of maltreatment. The intensive program lasted one year with short-term follow-up data. One significant finding in this study showed that the effects of SES affected developmental outcomes more than the effects of abuse. Although the deprived children in the residential center made gains while in intervention, the goal of reuniting parents and infant was not successful in most cases.

Evans, Ellis D., "Longitudinal Follow-Up Assessment of Differential Pre-School Experience for Low Income Minority Group Children." Journal of Educational Research, 78 (1985) : 197-202.

This study, performed in 1982, was conducted to determine the long-term educational progress of low income minority high school students who had participated in two diverse preschool programs during 1970-71. The major objective was to assess long-term educational impact and to appraise differences in attitude, school achievement, and lingering perceptions of their preschool education with those who did not have a preschool experience. Forty-four high school students were located from a group of 92 original participants. Of this group, 27 had experienced a highly structured, direct instruction program (DISTAR). In contrast, 17 had been involved in the conventional Head-Start program. For a comparative group, 20 students with no preschool experience were selected. No main long-term effects for differential preschool programs were revealed. Among the results reported, some positive correlations were revealed. However, the students followed a pattern of low achievement among the economically disadvantaged population. There appeared to be no cumulative advantages from preschool education in the absence of "sustained family contribution to the schooling effort." (p. 202)

Farnworth, Margaret, Lawrence J. Schweinhart and John R. Berrueta-Clement. "Preschool Intervention, School Success and Delinquency In a High-Risk Sample of Youth." American Educational Research Journal, 22 (Fall, 1985) : 445-464.

This research sought to answer the question whether early intervention can reduce later school failure. Another focus of research was the effects of early life experience on such factors as school placement and attitudes toward school. All of these outcomes were then related to delinquency during teen years. As a corollary to the research of Herschi (1969), Farnworth and colleagues of the High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, focused their study on 123 black children from families of low socioeconomic levels and low IQ scores. The participants were part of the Ypsilanti Perry Preschool Project 1962. The children (3 and 4 years) were divided into two groups in a random fashion. Fifty-eight went to a program of preschool intervention and 65 in a group that received no intervention. A method of self-reported delinquency survey was undertaken when the participants were 15 years of age. Fifty-nine males and 40 females responded to the survey. The results indicated that low IQ or scholastic achievement were "not important predictors" of delinquent involvement by age 15. However, evidence existed for a link between ratings of misconduct in early years with delinquency at 15. Findings reflected that early life experiences do persist beyond early childhood.

Goldring, Ellen B., and Laurie S. Presbrey. "Evaluation Preschool Programs: A Meta-Analytic Approach." Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 8 (1986) : 179-188.

This meta-analytic study brought data from 11 individual early intervention programs and sought to determine if there was one "underlying positive effect." Despite diversity of curriculum models, lengths of intervention, sites of intervention and ages of subjects, the data collected showed positive effects. The positive results were in the areas of math and reading achievement. The population of this "research synthesis" was drawn from a consortium report on preschool intervention programs and low income families. The data used in the follow-up studies was based on IQ scores, 4th grade math and reading test scores, students placed in special education, retention and "drop out" rates. In conclusion, Goldring, Presbrey, and their colleagues reported that the studies disputed earlier criticism of early intervention programs, concerning long-term positive effects. They did emphasize the importance of the findings in view of policy decisions on whether to continue or eliminate the intervention programs.

Haywood, H. Carl, Penelope Brooks and Susan Burns. "Stimulating Cognitive Development at Developmental Level: A Tested, Non-Remedial Preschool Curriculum for Preschoolers and Older Retarded Children." Special Services in the Schools, 3 (1986) : 127-147.

This research was based on the effectiveness of a teacher-directed curriculum on preschool high-risk and handicapped children. The Cognitive Curriculum for Young Children (CCYC) was comprised of 5 major components: (a) mediational teaching style; (b) small-group cognitive units; (c) cognitive-mediational method of behavior management; (d) parent-education components; (e) ancillary services. The Cognitive Curriculum for Young Children (CCYC) implementation took place in two classroom centers. One program was a university-based research center and served a range of children from moderately mentally retarded to high average handicapped. In the second site, a community-based program was serving mostly Title X eligible children. These children were sociologically at high-risk of being identified in school as retarded. Each group had 16-18 children from 3 1/2 to 5 1/2 years, black handicapped and white, boys and girls. In the final analysis, 27 handicapped and 48 high-risk children received 1 year of the cognitive training programs and 44 high-risk comparison children (without CCYC). Researchers proved that the CCYC participants showed significant gains in cognitive development after one year. Of particular interest were the positive gains made by the handicapped children and the high-risk children, relative to the participants in other preschool programs.

Hebbeler, Kathleen. "An Old and a New Question on the Effects of Early Education for Children from Low Income Families." Educational and Policy Analysis, 7 (1985) : 207-216.

This study, conducted in the Montgomery County (Maryland) Public Schools attempted to examine the long-term effects on children participating in a locally administered Head-Start program. A control group made up of children from a similar socioeconomic background as the Head-Start children but children who had not been admitted to the program for various reasons was included in the study. The study went one step further than such studies of the past and included a third group designated as "other students." These included all students born the same year as the Head-Start and control group who did not have the program. Their overall academic performance was poor. They were found to be consistently in the percentages of "poor" or "low average" students and were about twice as likely to have been retained when compared to the other district students born in 1966. The percentage of students placed in special education classes from among the Head-Start graduates born in 1966, 1970 and 1974 were 19, 17 and 12, respectively. The comparable percentages for "other students" in the school system were 5, 5 and 4.

Hebbeler, Kathleen. "Preschool Evaluation Report: Y ar 1 Report." Maryland State Dept. of Education, Baltimore, Maryland: Aug. 1985, Eric Document 286 337.

This research was based on the FWISD Prekindergarten Program, targeting disadvantaged preschoolers. Over a fourteen year period, studies indicated "that when a high quality preschool is provided, disadvantaged children increase their chances of higher academic performance, lower delinquency rates and better earning prospects." (p. 5) This particular prekindergarten study initiated during the 1983-84 school year, focused on development skills of an auditory, visual, motor and language nature. Academic instruction was limited to one hour per day and the rest of the school day was devoted to independent activities in learning centers, outdoor activities and creative activities in art and music." (p. 6) The resulting data on the 1,694 participants, revealed that they had mastered 90 percent of the objectives tested and failed at entry level of the program.

Jackson, Robert., John C. Cleveland and Peter F. Merenda. "The Longitudinal Effects of Early Identification and Counseling of Underachievers." Journal of School Psychology, 13.2 (1975) : 119-128.

University of Wisconsin--LaCrosse researchers undertook this project as a longitudinal evaluation and follow-up study among 10 school systems in the LaCrosse, Wisconsin area. The target population were students who would be identified as underachievers, through standardized tests and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale and group intelligence tests. One hundred seventeen underachievers were assigned to either the experimental group (N=62) or the control group (N=45). The experimental group received psychological services through the sixth-grade year. The control group was not prevented from receiving services, but did not receive the counseling of the first groups. Because of the nature of the study and the age of the students, the counseling services were directed to the adults in the childs' life (teachers, principals and school counselors). The purpose was to change the perceptions of the adults toward the child and his learning problems. The utilization of service such as tutoring, summer school, and enrichment activities was encouraged by the investigators. Data was collected after sixth grade, as graduating seniors and six months to one year of graduation. The greater percentage of the experimental group were found in upper or middle ranges of class rank, achieved higher test scores, had gone on to higher education, and were still enrolled after one year.

Kirk, Samuel A., and James J. Gallagher. Educating Exceptional Children. Boston : Haughton Mifflin ; 1986.

This book provided a comprehensive picture of the "special needs" child or the exceptional child. The author stressed that a child is considered "educationally exceptional only when it is necessary to alter the educational program to meet their needs: if their exceptionality leaves them unable to read or to master learning in the traditional fashion. . . " (p. 5) The book grouped children according to those differences to be better able to meet their special needs. With the psychosocial focus, the author reviewed those research projects that evaluated intervention strategies for disadvantaged children of low-income families. It concluded that "these programs are not a cure-all for children in the face of continuing poverty, hunger, and social disorganization." (p.140)

Kontos, Susan. "Family Day Care as an Integrated Early Intervention Setting." Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 8.2 (Summer, 1988) : 1-14.

Caregivers as teacher was an important component to Kontos' presentation on research related to the field of family day care. Of particular interest to the research dealing with early intervention were the findings of Goodman and Andrews (1981). Kontos found that those results and the data of Jones and Michaels (1987), suggest that early intervention with the care givers was "likely to enhance their effectiveness." The project Neighborcare model was applicable to high intensity at-risk program.

Kurtz, P. David. "Social Work Services to Parents: Essential to Pupil At Risk." Urban Education, 22 (1988) : 444-459.

Kurtz presented a forceful argument for an active liaison between the home and the pupil personnel department. He presented a concise background of research which substantiated the overwhelming need for this interfacing with at-risk families. Stressing that the "ecological perspective offers a comprehensive framework for school social work practice, "the author enumerated the ways the social worker can interact in a positive mode with parents." (p. 450) The social worker can form counseling and support education groups and crisis intervention procedures. The study also stressed the importance of staff development and teacher consultation among those who are working with the at-risk child.

Lombardino, Linda and Nancy Mangan. "Parents as Language Trainers: Language Programming with Developmentally Delayed Children." Exceptional Children, 49.4 (1983) : p. 358-360.

The purpose of this study was to "document parent behavior change when parents are taught to assume major responsibility for their children's communication intervention." (p. 358) The study involved six children (1-6 years) and their parents in a ten week program at the University of Florida. Parents were trained to employ teaching strategies and language stimulation. The parents exhibited steady gains in areas like control of setting, behavior management etc. The children mastered 64 percent of all items trained at home. The conclusion indicated that parents can be effective through "systematic instruction." (p. 360)

Olson, Craig C. ""Effects of Parenting and Home Environment on Student Achievement in Grades 3 to 5." National Institute of Education, Washington, D.C., (April, 1984) : ED 247 002.

This study presented preliminary finding which sought to measure home environment variables (HEV) during a 3 year study. Using the data for 198 parent and student pairs from rural and urban Wisconsin communities. Craig made use of achievement and growth scores and half-hour telephone interviews with parents. No home visits were included in the study. Under particular scrutiny were previously established indicators such as hours of maternal employment, family's socioeconomic status, positive attitude on part of parents to academics, etc. Because this study did not include home-environment observations, this study lacked the "how" and "why" factors and was missing a key link to the credibility of the telephone interview.

Ramey, Craig, Donna M. Bryant et al. "Projects Care: A Comparison Of Two Early Intervention Strategies to Prevent Retarded Development." Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 5 (1985) : 12-25.

This research represented a grant-related effort to measure a high intensity early educational intervention program. When the program combined with a family education component, it prevented the intellectual decline in high-risk children during the first three years of life. Based on demographic characteristics of high-risk groups, 65 families were identified in such factors as: level of education of the parents, family income, age of parents and whether any school aged siblings have repeated one or more grades or have scored one or more grades below on achievement tests. These 65 families were divided into three groups: Intensive Developmental Day-Care Plus Family Education, Family Education (with no intensive day-care program) and a control group which had no systematic education provided by Project Care. The strong conclusion was that the intense intervention did "prevent a decline in childrens' intellectual development." (23) The other conclusion of significance in working with high-risk and homeless children is that parent education alone was not intensive enough to have "a positive and measurable impact on intellectual scores during the first 36 months of age. (p.23)

Rickel, Annette U., and Louise Lampi. "A Two-Year Follow-Up Study of a Preventive Mental Health Program for Pre-schoolers." Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 9.4 (1981) : 455-464.

Rickel and Lampi reported the mid-term results of the Pre-school Mental Health intervention efforts. Forty-two children were designated as a high-risk placebo control group. Twenty-eight children identified as low-risk were considered the "normal" or comparison group. All the subjects were black children enrolled in Title I program in Detroit public schools. The results of this study indicated that the program behavior prescriptions were most successful with shy, withdrawn behavior, but had little effect on the aggressive treatment children. Implications for intervention with at-risk homeless children could be investigated since shy, withdrawn behavior have been reported most frequently.

Schmitt, Donald. "Parents and Schools as Partners in Pre-school Education." Educational Leadership, 44.3 (November, 1986) : 40-41.

This study looked at the data on the Mascoutah, Illinois program which used parents in a home-based educational program targeted for at-risk pre-schoolers. The children who participated in the program were identified primarily through the Caldwell Inventory. Parents met with preschool teachers and aides one and a half hours per week for 30 weeks during which they receive instruction in the form of daily teaching activities. The required attendance by parents ranged from between a 85% and 89% success rate. The participating children exhibited growth as represented through the post-testing. The partnership, however, brought about positive changes in the home environment for the entire family.

Schweinhart, Lawrence J., and David P. Weikart. "What Do We Know So Far: A Review of the Head Start Synthesis Project." Young Children, 41 (1986) : 49-55.

This study centered on the results of the Synthesis Project and the subsequent Executive Summary which analyzed the data on the effectiveness of the Head-Start program. In response to some of the criticism concerning the lack of long term effects of the Head-Start program, the researchers in the High/Scope Foundations have documented that high quality programs did lead to mid and long-term benefits. This research was carried on over two decades. Utilizing a method of meta-analysis this study looked at the findings of the Consortium for Longitudinal Studies (1982) and (1983) in addition to the 210 reports on Head-Start research. In the final analysis, Schweinhart and Weikart made strong argument for the Head-Start program on the basis of short, mid and long-term positive effects. The authors also viewed the necessity of a government sponsored educational intervention program on the basis of equity.

Sims, William H. "Evidence Continued to Mount on Benefits of Preschool." Report of Preschool Education, 15-17 (August, 1983) : 4-6, Eric Document ED 234-886.

The research findings of High Scope's John Clements presented evidence of long-term outcomes from the Perry Preschool project. Among the results of the tracking by the Educational Research foundation found that by 19 years of age, 67% of the Perry children had graduated from high school, while 47% of the non-preschoolers had graduated. Additionally, there was a greater percentage of Perry participants employed, fewer were receiving welfare, fewer were arrested and had spent less time in special education classes. There were fewer teen-age pregnancies among the Perry Preschool participants. Clement called for more research, especially directed with programs that better represent the norm, which according to the author, is not of high quality. The conclusions also called for greater involvement of families in evaluation and participation in programs.

Slavin, Robert E., Nancy L. Karweit and Nancy A. Madden. Effective Programs for Students At Risk. Needham Heights, Mass: Allyn and Bacon, 1989.

This book focuses on the latest information available based on research and application relating to at risk children. The major emphasis was on reform of compensatory and special education programs to better meet the needs of those students at risk of school failure. Karweit reviewed the major literature on the effects of specific curricular models and programs, including programs that have been certified as effective by the U.S. Department of Education Joint Dissemination Review Panel (JDRP). A key concern addressed by Karweit was the lack of "empirical studies of the effects of major approaches to preschool curricula." (p. 100)

Slavin, Robert E. and Nancy A. Madden. "What Works for Students at Risk: A Research Synthesis." Educational Leadership, 44.5 (February, 1989) : 4-13.

Slavin presented a composite of programs which targeted the at-risk child. In the preschool assessment, it was stressed that the early achievements in language and I.Q. diminish each year until they are lost by 3rd grade. However, recent studies indicate that the long-term effects are positive in relation to high school graduation figures and delinquency rates. Among the effective programs noted by the researchers were those which emphasize intensive intervention strategies.

Smith, B. "A Comparative Analysis of Selected Federal Programs Serving Young Children." State Technical Assistance Resource Team, Chapel Hill, N.C. (186) : 1-26.

This study was a result of an Early Childhood State Plan Grant program, as defined in P. L. 98-199. The investigators analyzed major federal programs and coordination approaches to aid state and local planners to organize a comprehensive delivery system of service. The "target population" was designated as handicapped and at risk children, age birth to six years of age and included family services. The "target services" were the early intervention/early childhood services. The research team compared three types of coordination vehicles: state plans and reports, backward mapping (Richard Elmore 1979-80) and process model (Edgar and Maddox 1983). This study also provided an overview of major federal programs applicable to at risk children and their families. It could be of significant value to those agencies working with homeless families. The seven programs were: Medicaid (Title XIX), Early and Periodic Screening, diagnosis and treatment (Section 1905 of Title XIX), Head Start (Title V), Maternal and Child Health Service Black Grants (Title V), Social Services Block Grants (Title XX), Public Law 94-142 (Title VI) and Child Welfare Service (Title IV).

Sponsellor, Doris and Joel Fink. "Early Childhood Evaluation: What? Who? Why?." Studies in Educational Evaluation, 8 (1983) : 209-214.

In this study, the authors stressed that the evaluations of early childhood programs, over a period of 15 years, demonstrated positive short-term effects on the participants. Some long-term effectiveness was demonstrated (e.g., Lazar, 1977). However, pressure to measure the "children's performance" as a "well-designed product" through achievement scores, had been largely the result of the desire to gain public and financial support. Sponsellor and Fink called for the use of "formative evaluation," "naturalistic inquiry" and "care study methods" to be used in the evaluation of the programs effectiveness.

Tashakkori, A., Sharbonoo Haghighat, etal. "Effects of Preschool Education on Intelligence and Achievement of a Group of Iranian Elementary School Children." International Review of Education, 34.4 (1988) : 499-508.

This research took place in Iran and sampled achievement of 568 from four elementary schools. Two of the schools were population of lower-middle socioeconomic level (SEL) and two upper to middle. The aim of the study was to investigate the effects of preschool education on children living in an urban center, experiencing socio-educational and post-revolution stress. Tashakkori reported "superior achievement and intelligence scores within the PSE group (with preschool experience). The study also followed those children through 4th grade and determined positive mid-term effects during the primary school year.

Tietze, Wolfgang. "A Structural Model for the Evaluation of Preschool Effects." Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 2 (1987) : 133-153.

In the research findings Tietze, documentation pertaining to acceptance of positive effects of preschool intervention in West Germany was presented. The research emphasis was on "assimilating" immigrant and handicapped children "into mainstream schooling." (p. 135) Evaluations were called for, according to Tietze, due to the continued changes and the need to determine the long-term effects on children. The results of this study indicated that a preschool experience did produce positive and lasting effects on the successful schooling experience for the child and those positive effects extended as social benefits to the families.

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE POLICY DECISION?

Ade, William. "Conveying Findings of Evaluations in Early Childhood Education to Decision Makers: Relevancy and Politics." Studies in Educational Evaluation, 8 (1983) : 299-303.

This study was a result of researcher Ade's concern that decision-makers were not getting input from research evaluation findings before making early childhood program decisions. This, he concluded, was a result of the relatively recent emphasis on early intervention and the influence and the high visibility of "social action" programs (eg., Head Start and day care.) The constituency support too often caused less concern for program effectiveness and developmental appropriateness and greater concern for political expediency. Ade also pointed to the lack of activism on the part of researchers and encouraged them to form "knowledge transfer groups." (p.302)

Barnett, W. Steven. "Benefit-Cost Analysis of the Perry Preschool Program and Its Policy Implication." Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 7.4 (1985) : 333-342.

Stressing the importance of making "public preschool program" decisions based on well researched evaluations, Barnett presented a benefit-cost analysis. (p. 341) Based on the Perry Project of Ypsilanti, Michigan, his findings on profitability, concluding that the "net present value of benefits and cost is positive . . . the program was a profitable social investment." (p. 333) The study of 123 children involved an experimental group of low socioeconomic status and low IQ scores (61-88 Stanford-Binet). This experimental group had received the program (1958-1962) but the control group had not been participants of the program during the years. An important key to this study was the home visiting program which took place once a week for 1 1/2 hours. The follow-up at 15 years and 19 years of age outlined benefits to society including: fewer years in special education, more high school graduates, less arrests and greater employment with fewer numbers on welfare.

Bereiter, Carl. "Does Direct Instruction Cause Delinquency: Response to Schweinhart and Weikart." Educational Leadership, 44.3 (November, 1986) : 20-21.

Bereiter, a researcher who has documented the benefits of direct instruction (Bereiter and Kurland, 1981), questions the information gathering of Schweinhart et al. in their long-term high scope study. This aforementioned study tied direct instruction to self-reports of juvenile delinquency. The reliability of the questionnaire and the lack of concern for female delinquency numbers were among the concerns expressed by Bereiter. The argument was that policy makers would discount benefits of direct instruction in improving reading scores and instilling positive attitudes toward school, due to questionable findings. Bereiter concluded with a plea for decision-makers to look closely at the research and heed the 1986 endorsement of direct instruction in the U.S. Department of Education Publication.

Bower, JoAnne C., and Others. "Increasing the Utility of Research via the Application of Multiple--Model Designs." Louisiana State Dept. of Education, Baton Rouge, LA (April 22, 1989) : p. 15.

Based on a 1985-86 statewide evaluation of Early Education programs for handicapped an at-risk preschoolers in Louisiana, Bower and associates have designed multiple-model instrument. The purposes of the study were to "define the program models that contributed to program efficiency and efficacy." This study attempted to answer the criticism voiced by many researchers that their findings were not given adequate value in the "decision making process." In advocating the use of multiple-models of research and evaluation, the authors agree that there will be greater involvement and cooperating or sharing on the part of educators and policy makers. Making use of naturalistic inquiry, case-study methodology and the qualitative approaches, the research plan further called for "waves" of data collection. In conclusion, Bower and colleagues found that this approach resulted in a greater enthusiasm and involvement by the participants.

Boyer, Ernest L. The Early Years and the Nation's Future. Paper presented at National Press Club, Washington, D.C., (September, 1986) : Eric Document 288-604.

In this paper, Boyer presented an educational plan for the future called BASIC School. Concentrating on kindergarten through grade three, the basic school would emphasize language and reading skills and students would have progressed through developmental stages in small classes. The school calendar would also have reflected the "changing family-work pattern" and auxiliary services such as pre-kindergarten, after-hours workshops, summer sessions and enrichment programs would have been offered. Boyer suggested the implementation of an Extended School, which could possibly be financed by parents and state funds to support enrichment programs and services for at-risk students.

Bridgman, Anne. "The Great Preschool Debate: When, What and Who?". The School Administrator, 9.45 (October, 1988) : 8-11.

Bridgman, in this study, presented the results of a poll taken of school administrators (AASA) concerning school sponsorship of early childhood programs. The majority (80 percent) felt the role of planning, organizing and governing a districts' child-care program belongs at the local level." (10) There was additional support for the use of a sliding fee basis in determining costs to families for such programs. Evidence existed from the studies of Bridgman and others, that only 29 percent of at-risk three and four years olds were receiving preschool education. Data indicated that the figure for upper and middle income children enrolled in preschool is well over the 53 percent noted in 1983.

Cardenas, Jose and Joan McCarty First. "Barriers to Excellence: Our Children at Risk." Educational Leadership, (1985) : 5-8.

This study was based on the findings of an independent Board of Inquiry commissioned by the National Coalition of Advocates for Students. After reviewing the recent research and the information gathered from hearings of state and local advocacy groups, Cardenas and First have analyzed the findings and present recommendations for change. The primary findings indicated that despite the efforts of the thirty years after the Brown decision, the income level of a child's family is still the major determinant of the quality and quantity of education a child receives.

Day, Barbara and Kay N. Drake. "Developmental and Experiential Program: The Key to Quality Education and Care of Young Children." Educational Leadership, 44.3 (November , 1986) : 25-27.

Day and Drake presented rationale for the effectiveness of developmental early childhood education programs. It was found that developmental programs were more flexible and meet the needs of the individual student. The research of Phyfe-Perkins (1981) "showed that where teachers participated more with children and were less directive, the children exhibited higher levels of cognitive play, task involvement and verbal interaction." (Day, 26) In Day's research, the curriculum organization was defined by learning centers, skill groups, and units of study. The results indicated better "on-task" behavior rates.

Edelman, Marian Wright. Families In Peril: An Agenda for Social Change. Cambridge, Mass : Harvard University Press, 1987.

In this book, Edelman outlined the strategies policymakers must consider in addressing the crisis facing our society. Edelman stated, "We invest in children because the cost to the public of sickness, ignorance, neglect, dependence, and unemployment over the long term exceeds the preventative investment in health, education, unemployed youth, and stable families." (p. 31) The book offered a compelling argument for federal intervention in terms of more and financial support for all those services which interface with the family structure. Although a great part of the study dealt with the black family, Edelman presented data that the poor white family is also in crisis, particularly with regard to educational opportunities.

_____"Evaluating Service Programs for Infants, Toddlers and Their Families: A Guide for Policymakers and Funders." National Center for Clinical Infant Programs, Washington, D.C.: (June, 1987) : Eric Document 288-304.

This paper was targeted to funders and policymakers and reviewed and illustrated the steps they could take to encourage and support evaluation services. It particularly mentioned the need for a financial commitment on the national level to adequately evaluate longitudinal studies. In additon, it stressed the need for a "social commitment to fostering the optimal development of children and families in the earliest years of life." (p. 11)

Goodwin, William L. "Contribution From Various Disciplines to Measurement and Evaluation of Early Childhood Education." Studies in Education Evaluation, 8 (1983) : 219-227.

Goodwin examined various measures and evaluation designs and the manner in which they could be applied to Early Childhood programs. The purpose was to provide to a wide range of disciplines for those who make policy decisions on such programs. The contributions of anthropology, sociology, ecological and environmental psychology, and ethology were analyzed and related research was fully presented.

Haberman, Martin. "Criteria for Judging Early Childhood Program Goals." Studies in Educational Evaluation, 8 (1983) : 215-218.

According to Haberman, early education has been impacted less from research on teaching than other levels. The studies contended, is reflective of the indirect manner in which most children learn. Haberman studies indicated that through use of setting, grouping daily schedule and activities, materials and activities, teachers "create an environment which facilitates or impedes what children learn," rather than the direct instruction of the teacher. With this in mind the author provided a set of criterion by which program goals can be judged (intrusiveness, worthiness and source.) Additionally, Haberman stressed that "goals generated from research should take precedence over expert opinion which is simple advocacy of a particular position."(p. 217)

Honig, Alice Sterling. "Evaluation of Infant/Toddler Intervention Programs." Studies in Educational Evaluation, 8. (1983) ; 306-316.

Honig emphasized the urgent need for evaluation of infant care intervention programs. The research, however, reveals that the evaluation was made extremely difficult by variations of models, format and locale, length of duration and staff training. In considering program delivery, the effects of evaluation difficulties when there is little or no uniformity in family involvement and cooperation, was discussed. The research concluded that the social-personal skills, achievement motivation and problem-solving skills of all the program participants was an important aspect of the program. Innovative intervention efforts were enumerated in this study.

Schweinhart, Lawrence J., and Dave P. Weikart. "Early Childhood Development Programs: A Public Investment Opportunity." Educational Leadership, 44.3 (November, 1986) : 5-12.

Schweinhart and Weikart reviewed a research model used to evaluate the short, mid and long term preschool effects. The authors stated that the short term results were effectively proved in the Head Start Synthesis Project of 1985. Mid-term effects were reported in the Consortium studies and and the long term research findings were found in the Hugh/Scope Perry Preschool Study. Their current research focused on the the benefits to policymakers and society in general on making a commitment to these programs targeting poor children. Among the findings were: 1) they were better prepared for school, 2) a good start demonstrated less need for special education or retention, 3) greater school success leads to low delinquency, fewer teenage pregnancies, less welfare recipients, and more individuals gainfully employed.

Sugarman, Julie. "Early Childhood: Greatest Vulnerability or Greatest Opportunity." Youth Policy, 11 (1989) : 24-28.

Sugarman, Director of the Head Start program for its first five years of operation, presented a well documented case for a financial investment in early childhood programs. With an extensive background in social service, Sugarman concluded that rather than uniformity of programs, educators must individualize developmental services and recognize that efforts will only be successful if they are tied to family intervention progrms. Using age parameters of pre-conception to age seven, the cost estimates in this study projected for needs in 1994, have been proposed to be $101 billion. The author states that his projections (charts and tables) reflecting need were not "empirically based on diagnostic assessments." The reason for this, it was explained, was that no federal or state agency has done the proper assessment and planning in this regard.

Wilson, Richard. "Here's Why We Put Preschool Programs Under One Roof." Executive Educator, 9.9 (September, 1987) : 25-26.

Wilson outlined the successful organization of early childhood education in the Brandon School district. Responding to the research and experience that proved the importance of early intervention, the decision-makers in this school district of 3,000 students combined their programs for the same community complex. Wilson outlines the following advantages: 1) sharing instructional materials and equipment, 2) children can move from one program to another as their needs change, 3) in-service training, 4) teachers share ideas and experiences. The programs serviced children from 2 to 6 years of age in programs such as : "Brandon Early Education Support for Children screened for developmental delays, Head-start for children 2-5 years, Montessori, Latchkey, Kindergarten and Developmental Kindergarten.

SUMMARY

For decades researchers, policymakers and educators have been challenged to identifying the variables that place a child at risk for educational failure, or prescribe their placement in special education programs. Unfortunately, the failure to identify and control these variables in early education programs has manifest itself through repeated retentions, chronic discipline problems, and the kind of frustration that has lead many to drop out of the system altogether. Sameroff, Seifer et al., concluded that, "it has become increasingly clear that biologic factors alone play a major role in only a small proportion of intellectually delayed children." (Sameroff, Seifer et al., 1987, p.343) As a result of their four year longitudinal studies of low socioeconomic-level children, they identified ten major risk factors, ranging from maternal mental health and anxiety, to family size.

The findings concluded, "as the number of risk factors increased, performance decreased for children at four years of age." The research found, "the combination of risk factors resulted in a nearly threefold increase in the magnitude of differences found among groups of children relative to the effect of the most single variable." (Sameroff, p.348)

The implication of multiple risk factors were of particular significance to Schorr, a lecturer in Social Medicine and Health Policy at Harvard Medical School. In the book, Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of the Disadvantaged, Schorr noted," Research has documented what common sense has taught: Economic stress, lack of social support and other protective factors, a fragile, impaired or immature parent, and sometimes a difficult infant can combine, in the absence of outside help, to create an environment so bad that it prejudices the normal development of the child." (Schorr, 1985, p.143)

Gabriel and Anderson's (1987) research identified twenty three factors or indicators of at-risk youth. They summarized, "these indicators of risk effectively demonstrate the scope and breath of the problem facing today's schools and society in general." (Gabriel, Anderson, p.7) They continued, " our contention is simply that all of these indicators are important manifestations of children at-risk." (p.7)

The majority of early efforts toward identifying the at-risk child through screening and assessment were directed toward the school age child. In the last decade, however, the research focus has been on developing inventory tools to be used with the preschool child. "Early identification of children with developmental problems or handicaps requiring special education services has received its most recent impetus from Public Law 94-142." (Ireton, Shing-Lu et al.,1981, p.394)

Emphasizing that family assessment has just begun to receive the attention it deserves, Wilson addresses "the significance of the family in early development, its role in subsequent school adjustment and performance and the efficacy of early identification of problem interactions in terms of treatment success." (Wilson, 1986, p.166) White stated that,"Urie Bronfenbrenner has led an effort to create a more ecologically valid study of the larger social forces in a child's life." (White, 1988, p.70)

The research work of Bradley and Caldwell, concluded that, "In some cases, environmental deficits are associated with health and developmental problems so regularly that it is possible to predict the eventual occurence of such problems prior to their manifestation or prior to their being able to be measured." (Bradley, Caldwell, 1979, p. 235). These environmental deficits, noted by Bradley, were measured by tools such as the Caldwell HOME Inventory. This was designed to "sample certain aspects of the quantity and

quality of the social, emotional and cognitive support available to three to six year old children within their home." (Bradley, Caldwell, p.236)

Paget and Nagle stressed the importance of the Ecological approach to the assessment of preschool children. Their studies proposed a model which, "recognizes that many factors affect a young child's development, (including parent, child, family and setting characteristics), and that all these factors influence each other in a reciprocal fashion." (Paget, Nagle, 1986, p.159)

Stressing the uniqueness of each individual, however, they postulated that, "this assumption is consistent with the necessary emphasis in early intervention on individualized intervention and accommodates the rapid developmental change, behavioral fluctuations, emerging skills, and varying experiential background of very young children." (Paget, Nagle, p.159) Wilson echoed the caution that if intervention programs are to be successful, they must be "tailored" to the individual and to their family situations. (Wilson, p.167)

Careful use of assessment results was urged by Colarusso et al., "to identify a child with potential learning problem at an early age is to hypothesize rather than confirm the possibility of later school failure." (Colarusso, et al. 1980, p. 355) Soderman and Phillips urged further research to better assess young children and to develop learning environments to accommodate learning styles and developmental timetables." (Soderman, Phillips, 1986, p.72)

Significant data in the field of infant intervention was found in the research of Ramey, Bryant and colleagues of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. (1985) Given that, "high risk infants were judged to be at-risk for mild mental retardation due to their families disadvantaged socioeconomic and educational status," they developed Project CARE. Ramey,

Bryant, et al. 1985, p.13) In the development and comparison of two early intervention strategies with families , they hypothesized that, "the intensity of the educational treatment (as measured by time and variety of family contact) is directly and positively related to the level of intellectual development attained by high risk children." (p.13)

Lombardino & Mangan (1983) studied a program that utilized parents as teachers for their children. Parental intervention programs such as their Language Training Program for developmentally delayed children, or the Mascoutah, Illinois project, (1986) which instructed parents in techniques to teach their children at home, were two innovative intervention programs. According to the Mascoutah study, "The partnership of school and families brings about changes in the home environment that benefit not only the child in the program, but younger and older siblings as well. The children experience a more cognitively stimulating home environment." (Schmitt,1986, p. 41)

Parent Education Program (PEPPS) was another program that especially targeted the parents of low socioeconomic-economic preschoolers. PEPPS consisted of a five session group educational program. The study, directed by Dush and Webb (1987) linked greater parent involvement , through a pretesting program, to significant gains for the child. (Dush,Webb, p.21)

Assessment of a quantatative evaluation of family intervention programs was difficult. Pupil personnel and teachers have, however, evaluated attitudinal changes, the development of the child's self-confidence, and the benefits to the family's inter-personal relations and self-esteem as desirable outcomes of these programs. (Kurtz 1988) Active involvement in their children's education at an early age, and the chance of giving their

children a better preparation for school, were incentives used to ensure parental participation. (Schmitt 1986)

Research has proven what common sense prescribes; the greater the involvement of the family, the more success with the child. "Researchers and clinicians who have incorporated parents into treatment programs for their language delayed children have concluded that parents are effective behavioral change agents when systematically trained to work with their children in a range of communication related skills." (Lombardino, p.358)

When developing early childhood programs in the past, educators have sought to strengthen the relationship between families and schools. The seeds of parental involvement were planted in the early 1960's, with the advent of the Early Training Project. Established in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, by Dr. Susan Gray and Peabody college associates, " it set out to design an intervention that would address what they judged , after years of study, to be the most important causes of school failure among disadvantaged children." According to Schorr, however, the success of the program was dependent on "mature black women with experience in early education and in group work who visited the families of these children weekly." (Schorr, p.193).

The Perry Preschool Project and IDS Harlem Projects encouraged community support, and established, "a mutually reinforcing cycle of school, community and family structures..." to address the problems of at-risk children. (Schorr, p.194) The Harlem project in particular kept parents, "actively involved through a center that worked with them on their own needs and on their relationship to the community and the schools." (p.195)

The Head Start program built its foundation not only on the cooperation of parents, but on their direct involvement in the program. This

direct involvement continues today. A 1989 study revealed that,"Nationally, four out of five parents with kids in Head Start provide some kind of volunteer service." (Leslie , et al., p.49)

Later research reflected less concern with parental intervention and involvement, putting greater emphasis instead, on "measurable outcomes," such as intelligence quotients and achievement test scores. Goldring and Presbrey's meta-analysis evaluated preschool programs and presented a practical analysis that would, in their words, "be useful for policymakers, administrators, and politicians to know whether there is one underlying positive effect of preschool intervention programs." (Goldring, Presbrey, 1986, p.180)

The dilemma of short and long term effects occupies much of the research surrounding early education programs. Of these, the Head Start and the High scope/Perry Preschool projects, were the most well known, and well documented. "The federal investment in these major projects created a strong tide of evaluation research about early childhood education, the ebb and flow of which has been characterized by somewhat inconsistent and often enigmatic results." (Evans, 1985, p.197)

Schweinhart and Weikart (1986) acknowledged this controversy when they wrote of the Synthesis Project results which, "centers primarily on outcomes relating to children's intellectual and socioemotional development...." (Schweinhart, Weikart, p. 51) Focusing on IQ scores, the initial results of the 1969 national evaluation by the Westinghouse Learning Corporation indicated that "after a few years in elementary school, the cognitive gains made by the Head Start children were often lost." (Schorr, p.191)

The findings of Goldring and Presbrey in 1986 conflicted with the Westinghouse study. They found that although the "average effect size for IQ suggests that the largest effect is in the lower grades; ..., it does not fade out entirely by the upper grades." (p.185) According to Schweinhart and Weikart's Synthesis Project, however, "the evidence for the short term effects of good early childhood programs is abundant." (p.7)

The most conclusive recent evidence for long term effects was represented in findings of (Schweinhart et al.1986) which "examined the effects of early childhood programs operating from 1967-1970." It used three distinctly different curriculum approaches; (1) the High/Scope developmental approach; (2) the traditional nursery school program; and third, the direct intruction method. (Brandt, Schweinhart 1986, p.16) The research indicated that the High/Scope and the traditional nursery school program participants as teenagers committed "less than half as many acts of juvenile delinquency.....one fifth as many instances of property damage and one half as many of drug abuse." It also described more active participation in extracurricular activities and sports, and "their families saw them in a more positive light." (p.16) It concluded that direct instruction participants (the third group) did not exhibit the same positive results, causing some researchers to question the accuracy of the findings. (Bereiter, 1986, p.20)

Other research addressed the "wash out pattern, wherein, immediate or short term cognitive gains attenuate with time as compared to control." (Evans, 197) Evans stressed, however, that some " extraordinary early intervention and follow through effects have produced a notable exception to this model wash out pattern (e.g. Schweinhart & Weikart 1980) ." (Evans, p. 197)

One supporter of preschool education was Tietz of West Germany who validated the positive effects of preschool education. In Tietze's work, (1987) which analyzed preschool effects, he agreed with Bronfenbrenner's conclusion that, "Preschool seems to facilitate the ecological transition connected with the admission to formal schooling." (p.149) Tietze's data showed that "preschool produced a consistent and lasting effect on success until the end of elementary schooling." (p133)

Tashakkori's studies, (1988) among the lower socioeconomic-economic level families (SEL) in an urban centre in Iran, revealed that the children living in lower socioeconomic-economic conditions were behind their peers in cognitive skills during their schooling. This gap, however, was smaller for those children who had preschool experience. Tashakkori stated that, "One may conclude that preschool education can be considered a means of enrichment and a suitable intervention programme for children brought up in a relatively poor cultural environment." (Tashakkori, p. 505)

According to Sponseller and Fink, (1983) "In early childhood education programs, children were usually evaluated in terms of their social and emotional adjustment...."With the advent of federal financial support and active promotion of early childhood education as a means to increase children's academic learning potential, the focus of evaluation shifted to program effectiveness. (Sponseller, Fink. p. 209) A wide range of research covering the analysis of preschool effectiveness emphasized the importance of future policy decisions, relating to funding, local, state and federal agencies. Goldring and Presbrey, who provided a meta-analytic approach to the effectiveness of several individual programs, intended to "aid policymakers to arrive at broad decisions as to whether to continue or eliminate preschool intervention programs." (Goldring, Presbrey, p.188)

Goodwin examined various measures and evaluation designs and Haberman (1983) stressed that in setting programs "goals generated from research should take precedence over expert opinion, which is simple advocacy of a particular position." (Goodwin, 1983, p. 217) This concern was expressed by Ade, (1983) who's studies indicated that decision makers were not getting input from research evaluation findings before making early childhood program decisions. Ade concluded, "constituency support too often causes less concern for program effectiveness and developmental appropriateness and greater concern for political expediency. (Ade p.301)

Hebbeler's research centered on an historical background of programs geared to the low-income, at-risk child. This study highlighted a concern that media attention, concerning the success of early intervention programs, would give the public a false belief that early education was a cure for all at risk cases. (Hebbeler, 1985, p.216) Slavin, Karweit et al. (1989) in the book, Effective Programs for Students At Risk stated, "the critical question is how the demand for preschool can be balanced against the urgent need for so many other educational services for at-risk students." (p.100)

CONCLUSIONS

Is it possible to identify those factors in the early life of the child which place him/her at-risk for later school failure?

Research indicated that not only was it possible to identify the link between lower socioeconomic conditions and school failure, but the findings also concluded that the existence of multiple factors dramatically increased developmental risk. With the greater number of factors, the "probability of

damaging outcomes for the child greatly increased." (White, 1988, p. 68) Intertwined in the fabric of risk factors were the influences of poverty, poor physical and mental health of the parents , malnutrition, developmental delays, and lack of stimulation in the child's environment.

The necessity of family assessment strategies was based on the understanding that a child cannot be fully understood outside of their ecological perspective. Measurement tools such as interview, observation, and questionnaires rely on the good will and willingness of the family to participate. Since many poor families operate outside the realm of social service organizations, they often have a built-in mistrust of educational and social institutions. Thus, gathering accurate information for purposes of research data was difficult to achieve. Nationally, these programs have existed in small numbers, and most often in locations adjacent to institutions of higher learning.

After birth, children are often not observed for evaluation until they are enrolled in kindergarten or first grade. The research indicated that at-risk children were those who entered school exhibiting developmental deficits, low self-esteem, short attention span, immature speech , visual and auditory problems, cognitive and conceptual deficits, and low I.Q.'s.

DO EARLY FAMILY INTERVENTION STRATEGIES AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS WORK?

The majority of the findings indicated that these programs do work. The most positive results primarily documented attitudinal changes toward education.

By increasing the level of cooperation of parents, and encouraging greater self-esteem, early intervention programs benefit the entire family. In terms of the child's cognitive gains, there was a well documented rise in I.Q. and achievement tests scores among participants in Head Start programs. The research on early programs in general indicated that the findings were positive, regardless of curriculum content. "Children who participated in preschool programs exhibited positive gains over children who did not participate in such programs. "(Goldring and Presbrey, p.183)

When results of a follow-up study indicated that some of the short-term gains were lost by third grade, educators and policy-makers became concerned. The Longitudinal Study of the Consortium (1982), revealed that when those attitudinal changes had been maintained, attitudes remained positive. Former program participants reported positive attitudes toward their preschool experience, lower delinquency numbers, higher numbers of high school graduates, higher levels of employed, and fewer teenage pregnancies. (Schweinhart and Weikert, p. 49)

Serious questions remain as to how consistent and long term academic achievement by program participants can be maintained, and how future programs will be funded. Every year the chasm between the advantaged child and the at risk child grows. Research, however, does not indicate whether early intervention efforts can grow fast enough, or efficiently enough to span this abyss. This will be in the hands of legislators, policy-makers, and school boards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is recommended that, in order to implement early intervention programs, at risk children and families be identified as early as possible.

2. Cooperative ventures, based on reliable research, must be implemented in conjunction with hospitals, social agencies and educational institutions. University -based departments of education could take the lead in these efforts.

3. Local, state, and federal governments must recognize the urgency of the problem of the at risk child and allocate funds to support early nutrition, intervention, and education efforts for both the children and their families.

4. Local school boards must address the downward spiral of education and investigate and institute programs that address the developmental needs of children from three years of age. This would include the possibility of housing programs for at risk preschoolers within their facilities.

5. The future will witness a projected growth in the senior citizen and retiree populations. Innovative measures utilizing their energies should be directed toward programs involving the at- risk child e.g. expansion of the foster grandparent programs, tutoring programs, parent support groups and home visitation.

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IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AT RISK HOMELESS CHILD

The question of what to do for the at risk child is now being compounded by the faces of homeless children. Obviously, homeless families with small children are not a new phenomenon in our society, but in the last few years their numbers have emerged as staggering statistics.

According to social researcher, Jonathan Kozol, "the chilling fact , is that small children have become the fastest-growing sector of the homeless. Of the 5,000 homeless families in New York City, an average family includes a parent with two or three children. The average child is six years old, the average parent twenty-seven." (Kozol, 1988, p. 4)

In the December 1987 report of the National Coalition of the Homeless, it was reported that, "40 percent of the homeless population consists of members of families. About 500,000 children are now homeless." (Coalition, p. 1)

Studies indicated that not only are these children deprived of the basic needs for "human survival," namely decent shelter and adequate food, but in some communities they are being denied an education. The Child Welfare League found, "43 percent of homeless do not attend school." (Center, 1987, p.3)

It was obvious that, if needs of school age children were not being met, what of the homeless infants, toddlers and preschoolers? Homeless children presented the possibility for an even more complex set of risk factors. Research studies were non-existent. Data gathering and documentation on the homeless was fraught with inconsistency and controversy as witnessed by the efforts of sociologist Peter Rossi, who stated, "the conventional social-science techniques of conducting sample surveys are based on the reasonable assumption that everybody has an

address." (Coughlin, 1988, p. 1) To further illustrate the research problems, Rossi points to the "capture-recapture methods" used by he and his colleagues in a 1985-86 Baltimore study of the homeless . The method which was "originally developed for counting wildlife, involves taking successive samples of a target population within a defined area." (Coughlin,p.3).

Some communities have not waited for survey, analysis, data and research and have responded with multi-faceted intervention programs, recognizing that these are "multi-problem families whose children are at risk." (Tolle and Kerwin p. 27) One such program was the Salvation Army Emergency Lodge, located in Chicago, Illinois. It involved an in-house preschool, serving children from three to five years of age, while they resided in the homeless center. The second phase involved a follow-up Home Visiting program in which "weekly home visits are made by a team composed of a teacher and social worker." (p.31) They assessed the educational and social service needs of the children and parents, provided direct services, and linked the family to community resources. " (p.31) Included was a strong working relationship with the existing Head Start program. Established in 1979, this Salvation Army program, with its emphasis on family assessment and intervention, has shed new light on the unique behaviors and multiple risk factors of the homeless child.

In dealing with the educational needs of school aged children, the Report of the National Coalition pointed to the "complex, comprehensive plan designed to ensure equal access to education for New York City's homeless children." (p.26) The plan in its formulation relied on "computerized tracking system to identify school-aged children in the shelters," additional field supervisors and family assistants who would interview families, complete registrations, and arrange for transportation needs. (p. 26) Although the program was never

implemented, mainly due to bureaucratic delays, it remains the only comprehensive program designed to keep the homeless child in school.

The passage of the Stewart Mc Kinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 has forced the state departments of education to provide a "head count" of the homeless children in their state and to submit an educational plan to meet their needs by February 15, 1989. (Jennings, p. 16) Many already over - burdened agencies and under- financed school corporations will be forced to rush to "band aid" solutions for this massive wound to the societal body.

A school corporation which supports at-risk research studies, initiates family intervention strategies in cooperation with community mental health agencies, develops innovative early childhood programs, and addresses the educational needs of the school-age child, may have taken a first step toward proper closure of the "festering wound of homelessness." Efforts of this nature are essential to change the course of failure for the homeless at-risk child.

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STUDENT QUALIFICATIONS

A. Personal

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Married:
Mother of five children, ages 26-19 years.

B. Educational Background

B.A. Degree: College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois. June, 1960
Major: Speech: concentration: speech pathology and elementary education.
Student in Master of Science Program in Elementary Education, Indiana University at South Bend, since 1986.

C. Employment Experience:

Owner and teacher, Shamrock Pre-Schools, Inc. 1976-1989.
Teacher YWCA Pre-School, 1975-1976.
Third grade teacher South Bend Community School Corporation, 1960-1961.

D. Qualifications

I have been involved in Early Childhood education all of my adult life. I have always had a special interest in the disadvantaged child and have been involved in programs that worked with special needs children in my volunteer time.

My field of concentration during my graduate study has been Early Childhood and I have attended numerous seminars and workshops in this field.

Presently, I am involved in working with the Homeless shelter in South Bend, Indiana